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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

21 January 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: National Intelligence Officer for Warning

FROM: Charles E. Waterman
National Intelligence Officer for NESA

SUBJECT: Monthly Warning Meeting - January 1983

1. Reactions to SAM-5 Deployment to Syria. The pace of delivery of the missile equipment now makes it appear likely that the SA-5s will not become operational before mid-to-late February.

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Because of the limited military threat posed by the SA-5s alone, analysts stress the Soviet political rationale is a much more vital factor at play. The Soviets are "upping the ante" for the Israelis who now would have to face the Soviets directly in any confrontation over Syria. By doing so, Moscow is attempting to reassert itself as a force to be reckoned with in the region.

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2. Iran-Iraq War Developments. Iran continues to build up its forces for an attack west of Dezful aimed at Al-Amarah and disrupting the Baghdad-Basrah highway. Iran now has more than 120,000 troops and over 400 armored vehicles in the area facing more than 100,000 Iraqis with over 1000 armored vehicles. Iraq is taking an active defensive posture and appears to be preparing its air force to play a more significant role than in the past. Prospects are for a very bloody encounter.

- A major Iranian defeat could weaken Tehran's offensive strength for months to come.
- Even a fairly small advance, however, in some areas could bring the highway within artillery range (at one point it is only 25 kilometers from the border), giving Iran a psychological boost.
- A major breakthrough does not appear likely but cannot be ruled out.

Amidst these military developments, there are tentative indicators from some Iranian officials of a softening in Iran's conditions for ending the war.

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It is unclear whether Khomeini has endorsed this posture, however, or if it is anything more than a tactical ploy. Analysts note that both sides still have functioning embassies in the other's capital and could negotiate directly if they want.

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No major new developments have been noted on the chemical warfare front or internally in either country.

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3. Egypt: Mubarak's Domestic Standing. President Mubarak's domestic position remains fairly good. Despite some grumbling, the military is loyal. The Islamic extremists are on the defensive while the mainline fundamentalists remain reluctant to challenge his leadership. Economic problems continue to mount but no crisis seems imminent. Despite many fears, for example, the recent sewage crisis in parts of Cairo did not bring on any unrest. The foreign exchange problem seems to have abated somewhat, at least temporarily.

Nonetheless, analysts noted some disturbing elements on the horizon. Last November's strikes seem to suggest more labor unrest may be possible than has been the norm in recent years. The anti-corruption drive, while popular, also has the potential to pose problems and embarrassments for Mubarak if close advisers are implicated.

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Charles E. Waterman
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SUBJECT: Monthly Warning Meeting - January 1983

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